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HOUSING HELP/AIDE LOGEMENT: A CASE STUDY

HOUSING HELP/AIDE LOGEMENT

A Case Study

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Homelessness robs you of a roof over your head and a sense of who you are. It changes your living habits. It changes the basic building blocks of your life.

(former Board member, Dalhousie Health and Community Services)

<u>Shelter</u> is the folding bed you roll out on the gymnasium floor at the church ..... <u>housing</u> is a place where you can keep your stuff, and a bit of your identity, where you can clean yourself and feed yourself in private.

Without a place to call home, our personal identity and self esteem are taken ... people crack up.

It all starts with housing, you haven't got anything without housing.

(former clients of Housing Help/Aide Logement)

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Housing Help/Aide Logement Clients: Three Personal Stories

Y.'s Story

Y. is a divorced woman in her early forties with a university degree and a disability due to spinal degeneration. She was in crisis when a potential job fell through so she was living on welfare, her private boarding house closed down, and she was unable to find affordable housing.

Y. learned about Housing Help/Aide Logement when she was scanning the newspaper looking for a job. She went to Housing Help/Aide Logement, told her story, and they found her an inexpensive room in a boarding house almost immediately. But it turned out that the caretaker of the boarding house was a drinker and sexually aggressive towards her. So Housing Help/Aide Logement contacted the owner of the building and the caretaker was replaced.

Soon after, Y. started to receive a disability pension which meant that she could afford an inexpensive market apartment right in her neighbourhood in the centre of Dalhousie Ward. But the landlord insisted on first and last month's rent, which she did not have. So Housing Help/Aide Logement assisted her to get a letter of guarantee for the last month's rent from Social Services and a letter of reference to give to the landlord.

She now lives in her own place and says "this has stabilized my life".

R.'s Story

R. is a single mother with two young children and a low income. Last year, she decided she would have to move - although she liked the place she was living in - because she was paying about 60% of her monthly income on shelter. This meant that she did not have enough money left over each month to properly feed and clothe her children. R. went to Housing Help/Aide Logement in the hopes that they would help her find a less expensive apartment.

R. happened to live in Dalhousie Ward, and her apartment was listed in the Rent Registry of Dalhousie Ward rental accommodation established by Housing Help/Aide Logement in 1985. By checking the Registry, the caseworker discovered that the rent on R.'s apartment had more than doubled in four years and, moreover, the heat that R. was paying in addition to her rent had been included in the former rent.

The caseworker tried to get a rent rebate for R. but the application was turned down because of the discrepancy regarding payment of heat and because the signature of the former tenant on the Rent Registry was vague, not considered valid proof of former rent.

The caseworker decided to appeal the decision. She looked in the telephone book, found the former tenant's name, called him, explained the situation, and (realizing that she was asking a favour of a busy

person who was not going to benefit personally from cooperating with her) offered to drop off a letter for him to sign. This letter asserted that he had paid a particular rent, including heat, for the apartment in question, in 1985. The former tenant complied, and at the subsequent Rent Review hearing, the letter was considered valid enough testimony that the former tenant was subpoenaed. His personal testimony overturned the former decision of Rent Review, in R.'s favour.

R.'s rent was reduced to what it should have been to comply with provincial guidelines, she received a substantial rebate, and she did not have to move her family.

J.'s Story

J. is a 56 year old man with no regular income who had been living alternately in a privately-owned cockroach-infested rooming house and on park benches when he first contacted Housing Help/Aide Logement. He had learned of Housing Help from a physician at Dalhousie Health and Community Services.

He had tried to apply several times for public housing but without luck, since he had no permanent address or telephone by which the housing authority could respond to his application.

The Housing Help/Aide Logement caseworker arranged for a housing authority worker to conduct a home visit with J. in his rooming house. The housing authority worker recommended seniors' housing. Because of a medical condition, J. needed to be close to his medical clinic and other support services, downtown. The Housing Help/Aide Logement caseworker had two letters supporting this requirement written on behalf of J., one by his physician and one by a social worker.

Throughout the four summer months between J's application for seniors' housing and his move into an apartment downtown (during which time he turned down two offers to be housed in the suburbs) the Housing Help/Aide Logement caseworker frequently followed up on his application, acting as a telephone conduit between J. and the housing authority and tracking him down in parks if necessary, to ensure that he did get housed. The Housing Help/Aide Logement caseworker also arranged for a social worker at an affiliated Community Health Centre to help J. find furniture.

He is now settled in his apartment, with a telephone.

Executive Summary

Background

Housing Help/Aide Logement is a storefront service operating in the poorest ward of Ottawa, and serving the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton. It provides information, referral and direct assistance to people who have trouble finding affordable housing, or to people who require information about their rights and obligations as tenants and landlords.

Housing Help/Aide Logement staff, Board members and volunteers also engage in public education on housing related issues and advocate on behalf of those people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

This case study traces the development of Housing Help/Aide Logement, describes the service, and offers concrete suggestions to community-based organizations that may be interested in establishing a similar housing service in other parts of Canada.

The service was established in response to a housing crisis which became acute in the early to mid-1980's and continues today. In the Ottawa area, a lack of affordable housing for low income people combined with a complex social housing delivery system and weak enforcement of landlord-tenant law, result in an increasing number of low income people at risk of homelessness.

Development of Housing Help/Aide Logement

Housing Help/Aide Logement began in late 1985 as a community development program of the Dalhousie Health and Community Services (DHCS), a multi-faceted health and social service organization in Dalhousie Ward in Ottawa.

The particular housing problems and needs of tenants in the ward were identified by means of tenant meetings and a door-to-door survey of 604 units in the ward. In both instances tenants were asked about their situations and concerns. Responses revealed a need for information about tenants' and landlords' rights and obligations, and for direct assistance in seeking affordable housing, especially among recent immigrants and people with low literacy skills.

Housing Help/Aide Logement began on a shoestring budget and struggled for three and one half years without core funding. There were several reasons for difficulty in securing core funding, according to key informants in this study. A service is an anomaly in the "housing field," where most solutions are in the form of either buildings or financing/subsidy schemes. The service was innovative, so there was no identifiable "pot" for funding money to come from. And each level of government expressed concern that, first, the terms of reference of the service did not suit the parameters of their own mandate or jurisdiction, and second, Housing Help/Aide Logement might be duplicating services provided by other social service agencies.

Throughout the search for secure funding, Housing Help/Aide Logement served an increasing clientele. Level of service increased from 4306 client contacts in 1986 to (a projected) 17,000 client contacts in 1990.

In July 1989, Housing Help/Aide Logement received secure, core funding for two years, cost-shared among the City of Ottawa's Department of Housing and Property, the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton's Department of Planning, and the Province of Ontario's Ministry of Housing.

Features of Housing Help/Aide Logement

Housing Help/Aide Logement is located in an older house, converted to offices, on a busy main street in central Ottawa. The interior is modest but bright, and the staff members are very approachable. Clients are seen on a walk-in basis during regular work hours or by appointment in the evening. Both staff and Board members consciously try to prevent bureaucratization of the service.

Two part-time satellite Housing Help/Aide Logement offices, staffed by one caseworker two days per week each, have recently opened in the west end of the Ottawa-Carleton Region. (In addition, Housing Help/Aide Logement has a purchase of service agreement with a similar but separate storefront service, Action Logement/Housing Action, which serves a predominantly francophone municipality in the eastern area of the Region. Action Logement/Housing Action is not described in this study.)

Housing Help/Aide Logement, which was incorporated in July 1990, has a cooperative and mutually supportive relationship with certain related organizations, such as Community Legal Services, the Federation of Ottawa-Carleton Tenants' Associations, and the Rent Review office of the Ontario Ministry of Housing.

Clients

The bulk of clients are English speaking tenants between 25 and 64 years of age. Most are receiving social assistance - Welfare, Family Benefits, pensions, and Unemployment Insurance. Some are employed with low incomes. About half the clients are childless single people, and about a third are single parents. (These client characteristics have been fairly consistent since 1986.)

One of the clients' problems is that the large developers who own many apartment complexes in the Ottawa area do not allow tenants to spend more than 30% of their income in rent, and demand first and last months' rent. Although this is normal and legal business practice, it effectively screens out most people who are living on social assistance.

Services Used

The main reasons for enquiries are: landlord-tenant problems, seeking low end market housing, enquiring about subsidized housing, needing help with subsidized housing agencies and needing a room.

The services most frequently used are: looking at vacancy listings, applying for subsidized housing (the application forms are available at Housing Help/Aide Logement and caseworkers assist with this process), dealing with subsidized housing agencies, and landlord-tenant information/mediation.

Public Education

Housing Help/Aide Logement staff, Board members and volunteers contribute to public education by means of presentations to groups, displaying the innovative Homelessness Maze, calling the media's attention to issues and events, publishing a readable, illustrated handbook which explains landlord and tenant rights and obligations, and by having students carry out specific projects.

Assessment of the Service

Housing Help/Aide Logement has not been formally evaluated. However, all indications are that it is successful in meeting a real need. The number of people served annually has increased 420% since the project's inception. The service has been and continues to be used as a model; the style, structure and procedures of Housing Help/Aide Logement are being imitated in other Ontario municipalities. Professionals in related agencies claim that it provides a much needed and unique service, and they are increasingly referring their own clients to Housing Help/Aide Logement. The genuine commitment of staff, thorough follow-up of client cases and style of service delivery - where "people come before paperwork" - are other aspects of the Housing Help/Aide Logement service frequently commended.

1.0 Introduction

Housing Help/Aide Logement is an innovative, community-based service operating in the Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton. It provides information, referral and direct assistance to people who have trouble finding affordable housing, or to people who require information about their rights and obligations as tenants and landlords. Housing Help/Aide Logement also engages in public education on housing related issues and advocates on behalf of those people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

Housing Help/Aide Logement was established to respond to the housing crisis experienced by low income people in Ottawa-Carleton, and indeed across Canada, since the early to mid-1980's. That is, a lack of affordable housing is combined with a fragmented and complex social housing delivery system. This results in an increasing number of low income people at risk of homelessness.

Although Housing Help/Aide Logement has not been formally evaluated, all indications are that it is successful: the number of people served has increased steadily since the project's inception, an increase of 60% in 1990 over 1989 alone; the style, structure and procedures of the service are being imitated in other Ontario municipalities; and the responsiveness of both City officials and landlords to Housing Help/Aide Logement interventions indicates that the service has earned respect in the region.

Housing Help/Aide Logement is regarded as a model housing service, responding well to an obvious need. Because the need for this type of service is evident, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) funded a case study of Housing Help/Aide Logement.

The purpose of research is three-fold:

. to trace the development of Housing Help/Aide Logement;
. to describe the service; and

. to offer concrete suggestions to community-based organizations that may be interested in establishing a similar housing service in other parts of Canada.

The research methods used for this case study included file review, personal and telephone interviews with key informants, and participant observation. Data gathering methods are described in detail in Appendix A.

The report is organized as follows. In the next chapter, the genesis of Housing Help/Aide Logement and its struggle to find funding are delineated. Chapter 3 contains a detailed description of Housing Help/Aide Logement - including its mandate, staffing, legal status, service delivery, physical characteristics, style of operations, client characteristics, level of service, relationship to other organizations, educational tools and activities, and West End satellite services. Chapter 4 presents brief profiles of three services in Ontario fashioned after Housing Help/Aide Logement. Chapter 5 consists of a list of suggestions addressed to groups which may be considering establishing a service like Housing Help/Aide Logement. Appendices contain (A) a description of research methods; (B) a list of key informants; (C) a list and brief profiles of eleven organizations across Canada which are addressing homelessness and the housing problems of low income people, and have expressed an interest in sharing information/ideas with other like-minded groups; (D) other addresses, telephone numbers and contact names considered useful to the reader; and (E) protocols/forms used by Housing Help/Aide Logement and the three similar housing services described in Chapter 4.

2.0 The Development of Housing Help/Aide Logement

2.1 The Housing Crisis

The acute and increasing housing problem for low income people which became evident in the early to mid-1980's across Canada was due to a lack of affordable market rental accommodation. This resulted in an increasing number of low income people at risk of becoming homeless.

This housing crisis resulted from a continual decrease in the amount of available, affordable ("low end market") housing, due to several factors - rental increases, gentrification, speculation, and conversion of residential properties to commercial uses.

Compounding the problem created by a lack of affordable rental housing, is the multitude and dispersion of social housing providers and other related resources. Each social housing supplier has its own waiting list. Some of the application processes are very complex, especially daunting for people with low literacy skills. Social housing suppliers' offices are dotted over the entire Region, and the poorest people are not likely to have cars. There are very few accessible resource people at the community level who can translate the relevant provincial legislation into lay language and give advice based upon the legislation.

This complex crisis may have been especially acute in Dalhousie Ward of Ottawa when Housing Help/Aide Logement was established in the mid-1980's, because of the high proportion of low income people and renters in the ward, and the large number of recent immigrants speaking neither English nor French, compared to the rest of Ottawa. (Exhibit 1, following page.)

EXHIBIT 1:

Demographic Profile of Dalhousie Ward

Compared to the City of Ottawa as a Whole

1983

	Dalhousie	Ottawa
Population	20,098	304,776
Tenant-occupied housing	80%	63%
Residential Units in Poor Condition	4%	2%
Mother tongue not English or French	29%	11%
Families with Low Income	42%	11%
Singles with Low Income	49%	31%

Reference:
Sobolov, Nora. Community Organizing and Social Change: The Case of Housing Help. Independent Research Project, School of Social Work, Carleton University, 1987:39. (The author cited: City of Ottawa, Department of Finance, Financial and Other Statistics, 1984, and Regional Municipality of Ottawa-Carleton, Social Services Department, Ottawa-Carleton by Neighbourhood: A Demographic Profile, V. I & II, December 1984.)

2.2 A Community Development Response

We used a Community Development approach - that means listening to people in the street, on benches, talking to local people in restaurants, going to school meetings, seeking out local groups - asking everyone - what are the issues? what are the problems? It was obvious housing was THE issue. .... It is important to believe the people you hear. (Community Developer)

We called a meeting of the tenants in Dalhousie Ward. We did it by putting up posters all over, written in simple language, like "Has the landlord raised your rent lately? Come to a meeting and talk about it." We heard about evictions, rents raised $150, all sorts of problems. People who had lived in the community for 20 years having to move out because of gentrification, speculation, flipping. (Community Developer)

Housing Help/Aide Logement began as a community development program of the Dalhousie Health and Community Services (DHCS), a multi-faceted health and social service organization in Dalhousie Ward. The program was initiated by the Community Developer of DHCS to relieve the escalating housing crisis.

The first step was forming a Dalhousie Tenants' Association, but the Association dwindled, for three main reasons (identified by the Community Developer). The mobility of renters was so great that there was little continuity of membership. Middle income people who joined the association gradually became home owners, disqualifying them from membership. And those tenants who were at risk of homelessness "were not interested in going to meetings - they were in crisis".

The Tenants Association meetings that were held, however, sharply revealed the needs of tenants in the area: the need for information about their and their landlords' rights and obligations, and the need for direct assistance in seeking affordable housing.

These needs were confirmed by the results of a Rent Registry Project carried out in Dalhousie Ward during the spring of 1985. The project

was designed and lead by a staff person specializing in housing issues, aided by the Community Developer and 30 volunteers. Information about 604 rental units in the ward was recorded by address, and included tenants' names, the size of the unit, and whether or not heat and hydro were included in the rent. Tenants were also asked about their main housing concerns. Their responses revealed a lack of knowledge about landlord-tenant legislation, and a need, especially among recent immigrants and people with low literacy skills, for personal help in finding affordable housing.

The information gathered during this project became the basis for a proposal to City Council, in late 1985, for start-up funding for a storefront housing service in Dalhousie Ward. This service of Dalhousie Health and Community Services (DHCS) was called Housing Help/Aide Logement.

2.3 The Search for Funding and Struggle to Survive

The Province and the City kept giving us money in dribs and drabs and saying "this is the last cheque".... Almost 100% of my time was used trying to get funding and trying to get it stabilized. (Community Developer)

What keeps you going? A Community Developer assesses the needs of the community and helps that community respond, or else finds someone or some body to help them respond. It's your job! (Community Developer)

DHCS received a small start-up grant from the City of Ottawa in December 1985. Although the initial request to the City was for funding to carry out a thorough feasibility study, the City insisted that the research and planning stage be skipped, claiming that they wanted action. Housing Help/Aide Logement officially opened its doors on February 3, 1986.

For three and one half years after their official opening, Housing Help/Aide Logement struggled without any secure funding. This was

despite the fact that the service had been recommended by a Provincial Task Force on Roomers, Boarders and Lodgers as a model, and was indeed being used as a model by other organizations in Ontario. During this period they served thousands of clients per year.

Several reasons for the difficulty in securing core funding were identified by key informants in this study. A service is an anomaly in the "housing field," where most solutions are in the form of either buildings or financing/subsidy schemes. The service was innovative, so there was no identifiable "pot" for funding money to come from. And each level of government expressed concern that, first, the terms of reference of the service did not suit the parameters of their own mandate/jurisdiction, and second, Housing Help/Aide Logement might be duplicating services provided by other social service agencies.

From the day the doors opened at Housing Help/Aide Logement, demand for service increased. During the early struggle for survival, since staff was small and service to clients was always the first priority, Housing Help/Aide Logement staff and the community developer who founded the program had to work long days, evenings and weekends in order to provide service to clients, educate the public and potential funding bodies, and continue the search for secure funding.

Housing Help/Aide Logement staff, volunteers, the DHCS Executive Director and Board members contributed to the search for permanent funding. They lobbied both politicians and staff in municipal, regional and provincial governments and provided hard data on Housing Help/Aide Logement's services and clients' needs/characteristics. They gave presentations on the housing crisis and on Housing Help/Aide Logement's service to community groups, service clubs, human service agencies and at housing conferences. They informed local tenants about tenants' rights and about the storefront service by means of street skits. They increased public awareness and garnered support through the popular media (newspaper and television). They sought support from other community agencies in the region, in the form of a letter writing campaign.

Housing Help/Aide Logement was also involved in several major events and developments in the housing field during the 1985-1989 period, thereby increasing recognition of the need for and the value of their service. For example, rather than making a formal presentation to the Ottawa Mayor's Task Force on Housing (1985), Housing Help/Aide Logement invited the members of the Task Force on the first Housing Help/Aide Logement Tour in Dalhousie Ward. The Tour impressed Task Force members and received comprehensive press coverage. During the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless (IYSH - 1987), Housing Help/Aide Logement displayed the Homelessness Maze at the International IYSH conference, held at the Congress Centre in Ottawa, where people from all parts of the world went through the Maze and commented on its impact. Again, press coverage was substantial. (Both the Housing Help/Aide Logement Tour and the Homelessness Maze are described in detail in 3.10 of this report.) Housing Help/Aide Logement also lobbied the City of Ottawa to negotiate on their behalf during negotiations over the City of Ottawa/Province of Ontario Housing Accord (1988). As a result, the City requested that the province provide funding for a housing information service in the City of Ottawa.

How did Housing Help/Aide Logement survive during those years with no core funding? The City of Ottawa not only provided start-up funds, but continued to be a supporter in an ad hoc manner. The Province also provided finite amounts of money over the years to "save them from going under". Some of the funds from the City were taken from a source of money set aside for unique projects that fulfil unmet needs in the community; and from the Province, from the Minister of Housing's discretionary fund. (Each provincial Minister/Deputy Minister in Ontario has one.)

Other financial support came in the form of a series of positions at Housing Help/Aide Logement funded by Social Service Employment Program grants (SSEP), administered by the provincial Ministry of Community and Social Services. SSEP funds positions for one year only, if they are given to people who would otherwise be receiving social

assistance. The purpose of the program is to give on-the-job training and work experience to social assistance claimants, to increase their chances of finding employment.

Housing Help/Aide Logement also received one-time funding from the provincial Ministry of Housing during the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless (1987) for the development and construction of an educational tool (the Homelessness Maze), and project funding from the Landlord-Tenant Education Program of the Ottawa Rent Review office of the Ontario Ministry of Housing during 1987 and 1988 for the production of written educational materials.

Finally, in the spring of 1989, when Housing Help/Aide Logement was again in severe financial crisis, a series of consultations were held. Representatives of the City's Department of Housing and Property, the Region's Department of Planning, and the Province's Ministry of Housing were present. The purpose of the consultations was to determine: 1) service goals for Housing Help/Aide Logement; 2) a mandate that did <u>not</u> appear to duplicate the services of any other human service organization; and 3) a funding mechanism for Housing Help/Aide Logement that was acceptable to <u>all</u> levels of government.

Since it was agreed by all levels of government that Housing Help/Aide Logement was a useful complement to existing services, recommendations were made to the appropriate committees at each level of government to fund the service.

Based on the terms of reference established, the three levels of government entered into a two year contractual arrangement with DHCS, because Housing Help/Aide Logement was not yet a legal entity. The following funding was provided, starting in 1989:

. $50,000 from the City;
. $100,000 from the Region; and
. $200,000 from the Province.

The $350,000, made available through the province-city housing accord, pays the operating costs of:

. Housing Help/Aide Logement in Dalhousie Ward (in the city core, but serving the whole Region);

. two part-time Housing Help/Aide Logement satellite offices in the western area of the Region of Ottawa-Carleton, which opened in late 1989; and

. a smaller and separate housing service, Action Logement/Housing Action, located in a predominantly French municipality in the eastern part of the Region, with which Housing Help/Aide Logement has a purchase of service agreement.

In 1990, Housing Help/Aide Logement was granted enough money to hire a Housing Educator for two years through the Access to Permanent Housing Program of Ontario. In 1991, Housing Help/Aide Logement must be evaluated before more long term funding is committed.

Examples of amounts, types and sources of funding are presented in Exhibit 2 on the following page.

EXHIBIT 2:
DIRECT GRANTS AND CONTRACTUAL FUNDING
HOUSING HELP/AIDE LOGEMENT 1985-1990

Following is a sampling of direct grants, contractual funding, and funding-in-kind received by Housing Help/Aide Logement between 1985 and 1990. Data are presented in a simplified form, for the sake of the reader. Therefore, they may not correspond exactly to audited financial statements of Dalhousie Health and Community Services (DHCS).

Year	Amount	Source	Type
1985	$16,900	City of Ottawa	Start-up grant
1986	$16,672	City of Ottawa	Grant (O)
	$10,000	Ontario Minister of Housing	
1987	$22,500	City of Ottawa	Grant (O)
	$23,500	Region of Ottawa-Carleton	
	$10,000	Ontario Ministry of Housing	Grant (O)
	$15,000	Ontario Ministry of Housing Rent Review	Grant (E)
1988	$35,000	City of Ottawa	Grant (O)
	$35,000	Region of Ottawa-Carleton	Grant (O)
	$20,000	Ontario Ministry of Housing Rent Review	Grant (E)
1989	$25,000	City of Ottawa	Grant (O)
	$15,000	Ontario Ministry of Housing	Grant (O)
	$145,000*	City/Region/Province	Con. Funding
1990	$240,000*	City/Region/Province	Con. Funding
	$37,485	Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services - Access to Permanent Housing Program	Con. Funding

Note:
Under funding type, (O) denotes funding received for operating expenses (such as salaries) and (E) denotes funding received specifically for educational activities, such as the production of educational materials.

** These amounts represent $197,500 minus $52,500 for 1989, and $350,000 minus $110,000 for 1990, the latter amounts paid to Action Logement/Housing Action, in accordance with a purchase of service agreement. (The cost is deducted here because neither the staff nor the client contacts at Action Logement/Housing Action is included in this study.)*

Neither the administrative/staff time provided by DHCS nor the Social Service Employment Program salaries are included above, although they were critical sources of funding-in-kind during this period.

2.4 The Growth of Housing Help/Aide Logement

In the 1985-1990 period, Housing Help/Aide Logement grew in terms of number of staff, number of clients served, and size of budget.

When they first operated as a Community Development Program of DHCS in the fall of 1985, they had one staff person - a housing specialist/co-ordinator/caseworker/educator - and several volunteers from the community development and housing activist networks in the city. The DHCS Community Developer also devoted a major portion of her time to establishing Housing Help/Aide Logement.

With the official opening in 1986, a secretary/receptionist was hired and later in the year, a caseworker, bringing the staff complement up to 3, handling a over 4,000 client contacts. In 1987, a second caseworker was hired.

In 1990, there are eight full-time staff at Housing Help/Aide Logement: an executive director, an office manager/bookkeeper, a housing educator, three full-time caseworkers, a receptionist/secretary, and a clerical assistant. In 1990, they will handle a projected 17,000 client contacts.

A table showing the growth of Housing Help/Aide Logement in terms of number of staff, total budget and number of clients served, is exhibited on the following page.

EXHIBIT 3:
THE GROWTH OF HOUSING HELP/AIDE LOGEMENT

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Number of Staff*	1	3	4	4	6.5	8
Number of Client Contacts	n/a	4306	6981	9069	10,863	17,000**
Total Budget~~	$16,900	$26,673	$71,000	$90,000	$185,000	$277,485

Note:

** In addition to Housing Help/Aide Logement staff, there are usually volunteers and students to help with the work.*

*** This figure is a projection based on data collected over the first six months of 1990.*

~~ The figures on the "total budget" row are "ball park figures" only, consistent with the figures shown in Exhibit 2.

3.0 A Description of Housing Help/Aide Logement

The following description of Housing Help/Aide Logement - its mandate, staffing, legal status, service delivery, physical characteristics, style of operations, client characteristics, level of service, relationship to other organizations, educational tools and activities - is restricted to the original Housing Help/Aide Logement in Ottawa's central core. The new West End branch of Housing Help/Aide Logement in Nepean, which is staffed by a caseworker from the central Housing Help/Aide Logement, is described briefly at the end of this chapter. (Action Logement/Housing Action operates independently and is not described in this study.)

3.1 Mandate

> *It's "Housing Help" not "Housing Referral". It's solving problems not filling out a form. (Board member)*

> *A good service must be flexible, client-driven, that is, it may have to change with the times and client needs. But funding sources tend to be defined and require tidy mandates on the part of programs. This is a problem. (Board member)*

The mandate of Housing Help/Aide Logement evolved over time. The range of services was determined during the early days of Housing Help/Aide Logement by interviewing clients, helping them to define their specific housing problem(s), and identifying appropriate responses. Case files and actual services given by Housing Help/Aide Logement workers were (and have been repeatedly) analyzed, thus providing a clear picture of client needs/characteristics and services that should be provided. The current mandate of Housing Help/Aide Logement is outlined on the following page.

Mandate of Housing Help/Aide Logement

Objectives

- *To increase public awareness of social and private housing resources in Ottawa-Carleton.*

- *To streamline and facilitate the public's access to social housing.*

- *To collaborate with community-based groups regarding the delivery of affordable housing and housing-related information services.*

Activities

- *Providing assistance to individuals seeking housing or seeking to maintain housing.*

This is done by: a) helping individuals interpret and/or complete application forms for social and other types of housing; b) referring individuals to other appropriate organizations or related support services (e.g. co-operative and non-profit associations, tenant groups, legal services, emergency hostels and other residential facilities, social service agencies, community agencies, etc.); and c) providing advice on housing-related problems, including follow-up assistance to individuals and households with complex housing problems.

- *Providing landlord-tenant information.*

Various means are: a) developing and maintaining a current inventory of subsidized and affordable market rental accommodation; b) developing and maintaining a current inventory of housing and related programs for special needs groups; c) promoting and providing information on renovation and other programs available to small landlords and home owners; and d) responding to inquiries and making appropriate referrals related to the rights and obligations of both landlords and tenants.

- *Developing and maintaining community linkages.*

Methods are: a) offering educational workshops on a variety of issues for landlords and tenants, community associations and other community groups working with persons who have housing problems (e.g., welfare workers, emergency hostel staff, home support staff, public health nurses, etc.); b) communicating with other housing agencies in order to identify issues affecting housing for low and moderate income groups; and c) developing and implementing a communication strategy for a housing information program, one which is responsive to cultural, linguistic, literacy and other socio-economic factors which impact on access to housing.

3.2 Board of Directors and Staff

Pick your Board so that it's made up of people who really know housing. (Board member)

A caseworker has to be socially sympathetic and structurally aware of housing and have political acumen enough to understand social action. (Board member)

Efficient use of our own time is very important; we're very careful to try to adopt an efficient structure minimizing the bureaucratic time for ourselves [Board members] and our organization. (Board member)

The Board of Directors of Housing Help/Aide Logement is comprised of a number of local people who have been involved in the housing and community development fields for many years. The membership includes: two former coordinators of Housing Help/Aide Logement; financial and legal experts; a housing policy consultant/university lecturer; a former senior policy analyst from the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation; and staff from affiliated services.

Housing Help/Aide Logement currently has an Executive Director, an Office Manager/Bookkeeper, a Housing Educator, three full-time Caseworkers (one of whom runs the West End Housing Help/Aide Logement), a Receptionist/Intake Worker and a Clerk/Assistant. Staff job descriptions were developed by the Board of Directors.

The Executive Director provides leadership and management skills to direct the development and operations of Housing Help/Aide Logement. The Executive Director's job description states that "the position requires a strong client service orientation, directed toward the resolution of client problems with a minimum of bureaucratic procedures", ... "client needs are served first" and "emergency cases receive dedicated priority from the staff, and the Director if necessary". In addition to standard managerial responsibilities, the Executive Director is also expected to: review and plan new government initiatives to assist the resolution of housing problems

locally; ensure that Housing Help/Aide Logement's local profile is developed and maintained; and ensure that funding bodies receive regular comprehensive reports on the service delivered at Housing Help/Aide Logement (that is, semi-annual reports on service delivered).

The Office Manager/Bookkeeper provides financial, computer, word processing and general management skills in order to look after all the usual office management responsibilities, including the management of the Case Data Base (using a relational data base named Paradox); complete financial records (using Lotus 123); and word processing for the Board and Executive Director (using Wordperfect 5.0).

The Housing Educator is responsible for developing and using educational tools and interpersonal communication skills to increase knowledge of housing issues in Ottawa-Carleton with priority on the issue of homelessness and those at risk of becoming homeless. The Educator also has an advocacy role: "to participate in public and professional forums to raise awareness of housing issues" and to "encourage and facilitate community involvement in influencing housing policy".

The Caseworkers at Housing Help/Aide Logement are action-oriented. Their general job description is to "provide assistance to incoming clients, landlords, tenants with housing problems and to represent Housing Help/Aide Logement". Their activities are as diverse and complex as the problems clients present. Examples of their activities include: helping people to fill out applications for social housing; mediating between landlords and tenants; assisting tenants through the rent review process; accompanying tenants to appeal hearings if necessary; reporting substandard dwellings to appropriate bodies; assisting handicapped tenants with apartment hunting; opening and maintaining files/data on clients; informing tenants and landlords of the legislation covering their rights and responsibilities; keeping an up-to-date list of community agencies for referrals; encouraging clients to stress the lack of affordable housing to politicians; and

giving presentations to organizations on housing problems and Housing Help/Aide Logement.

The Receptionist/Intake Worker has an equally complex job. In addition to standard receptionists' duties, such as greeting and channelling walk-in clients, this staff person provides some housing related information over the telephone, refers callers to caseworkers, keeps track of all calls and visits for statistical purposes, scans the newspaper for affordable, local rental housing, calls to ensure they are still vacant and then adds the advertisements to the vacancy listings provided for clients.

A Clerk/Assistant, usually hired for a one year term under the Social Service Employment Program (SSEP) assists with a wide variety of clerical duties such as filing, typing., etc. (SSEP employees have also filled the Receptionist/Intake Worker position and have helped with casework. The advantage of hiring through SSEP is that the people fill the positions usually have first-hand understanding of poverty and the problems of finding affordable housing, so they genuinely understand the clients' problems. A disadvantage is that the employees' one year term, while adequate for training, does not allow much time for application of the training and knowledge on site. The same person cannot be re-hired under the SSEP, for the same job.)

Staff are trained by means of a detailed Procedures Manual, by attending seminars conducted by the Federation of Ottawa-Carleton Tenants Associations, the Ottawa-Carleton Regional Housing Authority (a social housing provider), Community Legal Clinics, Rent Review (formerly the Residential Tenancies Commission, of the Ontario Ministry of Housing), and the Centretown Citizens' (Ottawa) Corporation (another housing provider) and of course, on the job. In the earliest days of Housing Help/ Aide Logement, staff and volunteers received information and training from the local MPP's staff, who were experienced in dealing with constituents' housing and landlord-tenant problems.

In addition to Board and staff, Housing Help/Aide Logement has a number of dedicated volunteers who assist with intake, help clients to fill in application forms, do public education, and look for vacant affordable housing by cruising the area in a car, recording "for rent" signs, and following up with a call to the number posted to ensure that the unit is still vacant, before adding it to the vacancy list. In addition, there are often students on placement (for example, from graduate studies in Social Work or Planning) who are able to carry out specific projects during their placement.

3.3 Legal Status

To receive government funding, to have a business relationship with government, you should incorporate. (Board member)

One has to remember that directors of incorporated organizations may be liable for the financial affairs of those organizations and this may be a disincentive to participation. (Board member)

Housing Help/Aide Logement was incorporated on July 1, 1990. As a result of this new status, some clauses in the 1989 contractual agreement between the funding bodies and DHCS will be changed to reflect the fact that Housing Help/Aide Logement is now a legal entity, independent of DHCS.

The main advantage of being an independent body is that the Board of Housing Help/Aide Logement is able to concentrate totally on housing issues and the services of Housing Help/Aide Logement.

Despite the support and good will of both staff and Board members of DHCS, when Housing Help/Aide Logement was one of many DHCS community services, there was neither sufficient time nor expertise in the for DHCS Board and staff members to thoroughly address issues and solve problems related to Housing Help/Aide Logement's funding or service. Another positive feature of independent status is that it represents

the accomplishment of one of the goals of most community development projects - to become self-sufficient, and not have to depend on a larger organization.

3.4 Service Delivery

Instead of getting into a panic ... I no longer need to run around ... now (that I know the caseworkers at Housing Help/Aide Logement) I go to Housing Help/Aide Logement, I can get referrals to as many as half a dozen other places. (Former client)

Housing Help/Aide Logement is open weekdays 9 am to 5 pm and serves client needs on a walk-in basis. Caseworkers will also see clients in the evening by appointment. There are three telephone lines. Callers can receive information and referral by telephone during the weekday hours of operation and there is a telephone answering machine left on after hours. The outgoing message on the answering machine gives basic information about Housing Help/Aide Logement and a telephone number to call in cases of emergency. For those people who arrive at Housing Help/Aide Logement before or after hours, there is a list of emergency telephone numbers, such as the numbers of emergency shelters, on the front door.

When clients call or walk in, their first point of contact is with the Receptionist/Intake Worker. They are given the information they are seeking, or they are referred to a caseworker if they are distressed, they have been threatened with eviction, or their requests for information are too detailed for the receptionist to deal with. The caseworker opens a file if they are in an emergency situation, they want to apply for subsidised housing, or a number of other reasons including eviction, a property standard problem, illegal rent and landlord-tenant problems.

Once clients' needs are clear, they may be referred to other agencies (such as the Federation of Ottawa-Carleton Tenants Associations, or

Community Legal Services) or the caseworker may make the necessary calls, visits, or write letters, depending on the client - their confidence, ability to communicate and other factors. It is at the caseworker's discretion.

Some examples of the ways in which caseworkers carry out their mandate are by:

. explaining, in plain language, either over the telephone or in person, provincial legislation affecting tenants, such as the Landlord and Tenant Act, the Residential Rent Regulation Act and the Rental Housing Protection Act;

. helping clients whose first language is not English or French or who have literacy problems, to fill out an application for subsidized housing;

. advocating on behalf of clients in relation to social housing agencies;

. responding to clients' problems with substandard dwellings (cockroaches, rats, lack of heat or water, plugged toilets) by making personal inspections of the properties in question and/or directly contacting the Property Standards officials at City Hall;

. giving information about roomers rights;

. finding emergency shelter on short notice; and

. obtaining legal advice for clients.

If a client needs translation services, a translator is sought from nearby DHCS, where there are staff who speak the various languages of the community - Chinese, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Thai, and more. However, people who do not speak English or French usually come to Housing Help/Aide Logement with a friend or helper who does.

3.5 Physical Characteristics

The fact that it's in a dumpy sort of house makes it much easier to come through the door. (Former client)

You have to be able to hoof it .. the majority of us are in bad shape... and it [the storefront] has to be equivalent to the neighbourhood and the standards of the people using the service. (Former client)

Housing Help/Aide Logement is located in a three storey older house, converted to offices, at 792 Somerset West, on the busy main street of Ottawa's poorest and most culturally diverse ward. It has a large sign "Housing Help" over the door in three languages - English, French and Chinese. The interior is simple, but sunny and bright. There is a table to sit at and look at listings of vacant apartments, a daily newspaper, a whole wall of information brochures displayed in transparent plexiglass pockets, a free telephone, free coffee, and a big box of toys for young children. The receptionist sits at a desk in this public area, totally accessible. She is not behind a counter or a glass wall (although there is an emergency call system in place which can be used to summon help from other staff, if required). Just beyond the common area, and quite accessible, are offices where the caseworkers can speak in relative privacy with clients, behind a padded partition in one case, a wall in another. The offices are as modestly furnished as the rest of the place. There is a bathroom in the basement which clients can use. On the second floor are the staff offices, a bathroom and a kitchen/sitting area. On the third floor are the Executive Director's office and the Board/meeting room.

3.6 Style of Operations

They're never patronizing here ... doesn't matter who comes through the door, and it's sincere. You're always greeted. (Former client)

Their approach is "OK, who are you? Let's know about you and your problem." They deal with that first, and then they deal with the paperwork. And they follow up. They stay in touch. (Former client)

I know three people who actually, when they went to open their mouth, burst into tears. And these people are not weepers. It was the first time someone had connected on a personal level - someone cared! (Former client)

The working style at Housing Help/Aide Logement is one that respects the dignity, individual needs and rights of every person who enters or telephones. Walk-in clients are greeted, asked what service they are seeking, offered coffee, shown the vacancy listings and message board, and made to feel that at Housing Help/Aide Logement, there are indeed people who care. If they wish to see a caseworker, they are seen in turn.

When clients are shown to a caseworker's office, they are asked about themselves and their problem first. Many are in crisis. Paperwork comes after. There is a conscious effort on the part of all Housing Help/Aide Logement staff not to operate like a bureaucracy, and not to appear to operate like a bureaucracy. It is recognized that many of their clients are suffering from "battle fatigue" from dealing with government officials of various stripes, and from egos that have been repeatedly pummelled.

Because the Housing Help/Aide Logement office is not physically accessible to people in wheelchairs, caseworkers will go to handicapped clients' homes, or in the summer, help them as much as possible sitting outside on the front steps of the storefront.

The Chairman of the Board has made it clear that one of the main aims of the Board is to retain the priority of "clients first" and avoid bureaucratization. The Board sets the tone for the style of operations and is vigilant about hiring staff who are committed to operating in this style.

3.7 Client Characteristics

[Most] of the time we're working with people in low incomes or fixed incomes like Welfare or Family Benefits ... they need help in finding housing and it's often really hard because most places, most landlords don't want someone who isn't [employed]. (Caseworker)

I know that through the day I see mostly women ... women tend to be poorer than men and they're the ones with little kids. You see a lot of women with kids. We also see a lot of single guys .. just looking for a room ... and immigrants. (Caseworker)

In the four years of Housing Help/Aide Logement's operation, the client characteristics have been fairly consistent.

Between 60% - 75% of clients are tenants and about 15% are roomers. The only significant change in tenure type is that the proportion of homeless has almost doubled since 1986. ("Homeless" people are not necessarily living on the street, but they have no permanent address. They may be living in a shelter or at the YW/YMCA, for example).

During the first year, most of the clients had learned about Housing Help/Aide Logement by walking by. Since then the proportion of clients referred by agencies has increased dramatically to 41%. A quarter to a third of clients are referred by a friend.

Data for the first half of 1990 indicate that a very small proportion of clients are under 18 or over 65 years of age. 39% are aged 35-64; 37% are aged 25-34; and 20% are aged 18-24.

The bulk of the clients are English speaking people. Other language groups served include: French, Vietnamese, Arabic, Somalian, Spanish, Amharic, East Indian and more than a dozen others.

Most of the clients are receiving social assistance. For example, in 1989, 41% of clients were recipients of Welfare, 20% recipients of

Family Benefits, 15% received income from employment, 8% reported no income, 6% were recipients of pensions (disability or old age pensions) and 4% were collecting Unemployment Insurance. This distribution of income sources is fairly consistent for each year of operation. Over 75% of clients in 1989 had incomes below the poverty line (which was an annual income of $12,037 for an unattached person living in a city the size of Ottawa in 1989). Again, this low income level has been constant over four years.

Consistently since 1986, almost half the clients have been childless single people. Almost a third are single parents with one or more children. In the first six months of 1990, 402 children were indirect clients of Housing Help/Aide Logement.

Most of the clients come from Dalhousie Ward or its neighbouring three wards. The rest come from Vanier and Nepean, two cities in the Region of Ottawa-Carleton, flanking the City of Ottawa. People also call or visit from outlying communities. Clients are referred by a growing number of agencies/organizations, including Regional Social Services, transitions homes for battered women, and shelters.

3.8 Level of Service

They [work], if needs be, 24 hours a day....it's real commitment. (Former client)

The level of service has increased steadily from the day Housing Help/Aide Logement opened in 1986 - an increase of 420% in four years. Client contacts (which include both inquiries and cases for which files are opened) totalled: 4306 in 1986; 6981 in 1987; 9069 in 1988; 10,863 in 1989; and, based on data from the first six months of 1990, it is projected that over 17,000 client contacts will have been made in 1990. The number of cases for which files are opened per year remains relatively constant at between 600-700, or about 50 per month. The reason this number has not increased at the same rate as inquiries

is said to be that the intake worker and caseworkers are "getting better at screening and referral".

The main reasons for inquiries, which vary in order of frequency by year, are: landlord/tenant problems, seeking low end market housing, enquiring about subsidized housing, needing help with subsidised housing agencies, and needing a room.

The Housing Help/Aide Logement services most frequently used over the years is also fairly steady: looking at vacancy listings, applying for subsidized housing, assistance dealing with a subsidized housing agency, and landlord-tenant information/mediation.

3.9 Relationship with Associated Organizations

Housing Help is the best source of information and help to low income people searching for a scarce commodity - affordable housing - in Ottawa-Carleton. They also call the attention of the powers that be to the difficulties that many people have in finding affordable housing. (Representative of associated organization)

They provide a one stop service - clients can look at the vacancy board, get information about legislation, and apply for public housing, without running around to twenty different places. (Representative of associated organization)

[Housing Help's] style of operation is important - their approachability and profile in the neighbourhood contribute to their accomplishment. (Representative of associated organization)

Relationships with associated organizations were consciously sought and nurtured during the first months of Housing Help/Aide Logement's operation. The first coordinator/educator/caseworker made a point of contacting related organizations and describing both the specific housing problems of Housing Help/Aide Logement clients and the one-

stop service being developed to solve those problems. This liaison work was done by telephone or, more often, in person (by inviting representatives of related organizations to the storefront or visiting their offices).

The cooperation and input of the related organizations was also sought. For example, the various social housing landlords in the Region were asked to make copies of their application forms available to Housing Help/Aide Logement clients at the storefront, because clients frequently need help filling out the application forms and often do not have bus fare to go to the offices of social housing providers dotted all over the Region. In addition, individuals at several agencies were asked to contribute their knowledge and experience to the training of caseworkers.

Although some organizations exhibited concern that Housing Help/Aide Logement might usurp their position, threaten the security of their funding or provide a redundant service, in time it became clear that Housing Help/Aide Logement did indeed provide a unique and much needed service which did not threaten the existence of any other local organization.

Currently, Housing Help/Aide Logement's primary cooperative relationships are with: the Ottawa Area Rent Review Office of the Ontario Ministry of Housing, Community Legal Services of Ottawa-Carleton, the Property Standards Branch of the City of Ottawa, and the Federation of Ottawa-Carleton Tenants Associations.

Rent Review (formerly the Residential Tenancies Commission) officers have provided information/training to Housing Help/Aide Logement caseworkers in the rent review process, and they refer clients who need hands-on help with housing problems to Housing Help/Aide Logement. In addition, since the establishment in 1987 of the Ontario Ministry of Housing's Landlord-Tenant Education Program (administered through Rent Review) the relationship to Housing Help/Aide Logement is one of funding body. Rent Review has given two grants for the

production, printing and distribution of printed educational materials since 1987. (Refer to Exhibit 2.)

The fundamental on-going relationship between Community Legal Services and Housing Help/Aide Logement is one of mutual referral and cooperation. Community Legal Services has also provided training in casework methods for Housing Help/ Aide Logement caseworkers. During the first months of Housing Help/Aide Logement's operation, a Community Legal Services lawyer was on site one afternoon or evening per week. This arrangement was found to be impractical, however, since clients with legal problems/questions usually could not wait until a specific day to have them addressed. Therefore, caseworkers now telephone Community Legal Services for legal information/advice on an as-needed basis. One office of Community Legal Services keeps an "open line" for Housing Help/Aide Logement calls.

Over the years of Housing Help/Aide Logement's operation, the caseworkers have become increasingly knowledgeable about legal issues, and therefore call Community Legal Services less frequently for information.

The Property Standards Branch of the City of Ottawa receives calls/complaints from Housing Help/Aide Logement but does not give them particular priority. In the first years of Housing Help/Aide Logement's operation, a Dalhousie Ward Property Standards inspector would pick up a batch of property standards complaints regularly at Housing Help/Aide Logement's office, but this is no longer the practice. Housing Help/Aide Logement caseworkers follow up on requests for property inspections to see if landlords have complied with requests from the Property Standards Branch.

The Federation of Ottawa-Carleton Tenants Associations (FOCTA) is an older community-based organization than Housing Help/Aide Logement, but both groups have evolved over the years to a relationship of "minimal overlap and good cooperation" and "mutually supportive goals but separate mandates". The FOCTA specializes in landlord-tenant

legislation, especially in supporting tenants with rent review issues, and in establishing tenants associations in apartment buildings.

3.10 Educational Tools and Activities

You have to be able to think independently and creatively to run a place like this. (Former client)

In addition to offering the hands-on service already described, Housing Help/Aide Logement has developed several innovative educational tools to raise consciousness and disseminate information about the risks of homelessness and common landlord-tenant problems. Examples include the Housing Help/Aide Logement Tour, the Homelessness Maze, the Housing Help Players, the Housing Help/Aide Logement Handbook, formal presentations by staff and Board members and participation in consultations with other human service agencies.

The Housing Help/Aide Logement Tour has been held three times since 1985. The purpose of the tour is to raise the profile of housing problems in the Ward and the City generally and at the Property Standards Branch of the City. Historical information is gathered on certain properties within a geographic area of about 4 square kilometres of the Housing Help/Aide Logement storefront, which illustrate some of the housing problems affecting low income people: gentrification, speculation, conversion to commercial use, gouging by landlords, and lack of enforcement of property standards. Several examples of responsible and proactive landlords are also presented. (For the most recent tour, students from the School of Social Work at Carleton University helped to gather this information.) A group of people go on the walking tour, led by staff from Housing Help/Aide Logement (or, in 1990, the students) who explain the situation of each property. Brief written histories of the sites are also provided to the group members. In 1990, the tour was attended by delegates from the Habitat International Coalition conference held in Ottawa in May. They represented such countries as Zambia, Tanzania, Argentina,

Colombia and Thailand. In the same month, a second tour was provided for members of the Canadian Housing and Renewal Association who were meeting in Ottawa. The Housing Help/Aide Logement Tour has received regular coverage by the popular media.

The Homelessness Maze is a public education project/tour designed by a former coordinator of Housing Help/Aide Logement and funded by a special one-time grant during the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless (1987). The Maze is a circular structure, 36 feet in diameter and 6.5 feet high. Text and graphics printed on plastic signs convey the message. When you enter the Homelessness Maze, you take on a new identity - that of a homeless person. Your journey through the Maze is guided by the information on the signs. The experience lasts about 20 minutes. Three scenarios are included: you are either a single person, a single parent with two children or a couple with four children. You experience the actual frustrations of looking for affordable housing - high rent, substandard accommodation, discrimination, lack of information, dead ends and loops. (The scenarios were generated and checked by consulting with clients of Housing Help/Aide Logement.) You exit from the Maze either by finding adequate, affordable housing or by remaining homeless. After completing the trip you speak with staff and get further information about homelessness.

The Maze was displayed in downtown Ottawa during the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless and is displayed at community events in the Region on a regular basis. Assessments of the Maze are positive - "it makes people think". (See photographs, next page.)

EXHIBIT 4:

THE HOUSING HELP/AIDE LOGEMENT HOMELESSNESS MAZE

The Housing Help Players was a troupe of volunteers who acted out skits on street corners in Dalhousie Ward and at special events on request, such as the Annual General Meetings of organizations and service groups. Their skits illustrated housing problems and solutions. The troupe is not currently active.

The Housing Help/Aide Logement Handbook is a bound document, written in plain language and illustrated with funny and poignant cartoons of people in common housing crises. Inside the front cover, emergency telephone numbers in the Ottawa-Carleton region are listed - for example, transition homes for battered women, legal aid, property standards officers. The structure of the book is based on simple questions, such as, "Does your heat work?" "Does your landlord refuse to fix things?" These are followed by suggestions of what to do. The handbook also explains the basics of three main pieces of Ontario legislation that concern landlord-tenant responsibilities and rights, how property standards work, and some basic human rights. It concludes with a brief description of Housing Help/Aide Logement. The first such handbook was produced in 1987, and has been updated each year.

Formal presentations are made to service groups, church groups, and others, about what Housing Help/Aide Logement does and about what the audience members can do to help relieve the housing problems of low income people.

Another aspect of Housing Help/Aide Logement's mandate - "to assist community-based organizations, social housing developers and agencies providing support services to meet the housing requirements of those most in need" - is met by providing information to, meeting with and sharing work on committees, etc., with other people in the human services field who are concerned with adequacy and security of housing as one aspect of overall well-being. One group with whom there has been regular communication is the Social Planing Council of Ottawa-Carleton's Housing Committee. The benefits of such on-going communication are, first, preventing duplication of services, and

second, sharing information on new ideas, problems, solutions, advocacy and coalitions.

Housing Help/Aide Logement coordinators and case workers have also hosted a number of people from other Ontario Municipalities who have visited Ottawa to learn how they run their service, design their protocols, use their physical space, etc.

3.11 West End Services

In late 1989, a part-time Housing Help/Aide Logement was established in Nepean, a young municipality adjacent to Ottawa's west end. It had become apparent from the data kept on clients that some were coming to the downtown Ottawa storefront, all the way from Nepean. Also, it was in the terms of agreement with the funding bodies that the housing service would not be limited to the city core, but would indeed be accessible to people in the whole Region. (The eastern area of Ottawa-Carleton is served by Action Logement/Housing Action, a separate organization with their own Board, with which Housing Help/Aide Logement has a purchase of service agreement. They keep their own statistics, and are not included in this study.)

At first, the service was set up in a church basement on the main commercial strip in Nepean and advertised by means of outreach (making themselves known to other human service agencies) and a sandwich board on the sidewalk. There was very little client response, probably because very few people walk along this strip - it is designed for cars. Then the service was moved to a community resource centre, again, not a visible, accessible storefront, but a location where people are going for other services.

Similarly, a second office was opened in another community resource centre in Ottawa West. Each office is open two full days per week, staffed by one caseworker.

In the first six months of 1990, the west end offices responded to 250 enquiries and opened 45 files. Most of the tenants' problems are related to the high cost of apartments in Nepean in relation to their income, and the need to find low-end of market accommodation. The large developers that own most of the apartments in the area do not allow tenants to spend more than 30% of their income in rent, and demand first and last months' rent. Although this is normal and legal business practice, it effectively screens out most people who are living on social assistance.

The client profile is similar to that of the downtown Housing Help/Aide Logement: three quarters with incomes below the poverty line, most living on Welfare, Family Benefits or Unemployment Insurance, and two thirds of the single adults with children.

4.0 Similar Housing Services in Ontario

Numerous organizations have sent representatives to Housing Help/Aide Logement to consult with staff members, observe the physical setting/style of operations, discuss the development of client intake forms, and so on, in the interests of setting up a similar service. In this way Housing Help/Aide Logement has served as a model.

Three of these organizations, (funded under the Access to Permanent Housing Program of Ontario) are: the Housing Help Centre of Hamilton-Wentworth, Project Share in Niagara falls, and the Housing Help Centre in St. Catharines-Welland. They are described briefly here. Their and Housing Help/Aide Logement's protocols are exhibited in Appendix E.

4.1 The Housing Help Centre in Hamilton-Wentworth

This service opened in May 1989. They offer direct assistance in finding affordable housing, a one stop housing information service, free listing of vacancies for landlords, advocacy for the homeless and tenants with low incomes, and public educational sessions on landlord-tenant legislation.

Before setting up their service, the Hamilton-Wentworth staff travelled to Ottawa and observed the workings of the Housing Help/Aide Logement storefront. They adopted Ottawa's intake forms as a model. A staff person of Hamilton-Wentworth Housing Help Centre pointed out that although she was unable to relate any processes or strategies suggested by Ottawa's Housing Help/Aide Logement that did not work when applied to her organization, in her experience processes are likely to evolve as an organization develops within a given community and as caseworkers and other staff gain more experience.

4.2 Project Share, Niagara Falls

Opened in May 1989, this multi-service organization offers direct client services to individuals who are homeless or potentially homeless, by providing information, advocacy, and coordination with other agencies. (They also provide a food co-op, a food bank and an emergency transportation service).

Contact was made with Housing Help/Aide Logement in Ottawa when Project Share was in its beginning stages. Caseworkers were observed for their style of working, the resource centre in the waiting area of the Ottawa storefront was copied at Project Share, and staff from the Niagara service called Ottawa Housing Help/Aide Logement many times for information about ways to carry out public education, with particular emphasis on the Homelessness Maze. The Project Share Director says "Ottawa Housing Help really served as a model for us."

4.3 The Housing Help Centre of St. Catharines

This centre is one of three in the Niagara Region - there are branch offices in Fort Erie and Welland. They provide a drop-in Resource Centre and Housing Registry/Directory, information and direct assistance in finding emergency shelter and permanent housing, information on landlord-tenant legislation, workshops and seminars, and the full-time services of a street worker to work directly with the homeless population and individuals living in shelter situations. The St. Catharines office is located in a community resource centre.

In 1989, representatives of the St. Catharines and Fort Erie Housing Help Centres visited the Ottawa Housing Help/Aide Logement and observed how the storefront operation was organized and operated. Although they did not request much other information, their intake forms and the range of services offered are very similar to those of Ottawa's Housing Help/Aide Logement.

4.4 Similarities and Differences

Clearly, the range of services offered by all three organizations are similar. In addition, they have similar clients - mostly single people and single parents living on social assistance. Staff tend to spend the bulk of their working time on, first, helping clients find permanent affordable housing, and second, providing information about or helping with problems related to landlord-tenant rights and obligations. Like Ottawa's Housing Help/Aide Logement, none of these housing services has secured a commitment for permanent, on-going funding.

There are also differences. The particular characteristics of different communities will always influence the design of their services. For example, in Niagara falls, where there are more hotels per population than most cities in the country, the caseworkers have made arrangements with hotel owners to use hotel rooms as emergency shelter.

Addresses, telephone numbers and contact names for Ottawa's Housing Help/Aide Logement and for the three housing services described above are listed in Appendix D.

Examples of client intake/case forms and other protocols used in service delivery and data collection are exhibited in Appendix E.

5.0 Suggestions to Organizations Considering Establishing a Service like Ottawa's Housing Help/Aide Logement

All the key informants interviewed for this case study, including Board members, front line staff, clients and government officials, were asked "What advice would you give to groups in other parts of Canada interested in establishing services similar to those of Housing Help?" Their advice - some of it contradictory - is organized by topic and reported verbatim here.

5.1 Starting Out - Finding Support and Funding

. Assess the political and resource situation - there are various options for starting up. In every one of them, need [for service] must be demonstrated.

. To find out about the needs of your community, call a public meeting of tenants, identify their needs and problems.

. Be open to what the community need is and take that as your lead to be responsive. Take a look at your own needs, and adapt [a model rather than adopting it].

. Be sure to do your homework. Do not design or try to get funding for a service that duplicates another service.

. Point out that part of your work will be to make referrals to other related services.

. Provide as much hard data as you can get your hands on.

. To make a strong case for financial support: ... show that your service forestalls and solves problems and saves government money, and is supported by the community.

. Start keeping statistics immediately, even if you're a shoestring operation.

. When you are applying pressure for funding, lobby the individuals who make the funding decisions, such as the Mayor, the Minister of Housing, your local Alderman.

. Be prepared to risk the start-up, then prove the need is there by providing data on your growing clientele.

. Do not expect individuals to work day and night for months and months without secure or reasonable remuneration - you will lose good staff when continuity of staffing is very important.

. Use many means to lobby for funding - pester government officials and politicians ... provide lots of numbers.

. Find your allies, whether at the city, regional or provincial level. Stick with them.

. Point out that the increasing complexity of the housing field combined with the literacy problems of many Canadians and the increased number of new Canadians who speak neither English nor French, results in a critical situation where many people really need help.

. If you convene a meeting to establish your terms of reference, and various levels of government and agencies/services are represented, it is best to have the meeting convened or chaired by someone who does not have a stake in the outcome.

. Pitch your applications for funding within the jurisdictional and geographical confines that are those of the potential funding organization. If you are dealing with government, point out that you are dealing with the people that the government represents.

. Start off as an outgrowth of a larger organization, one that is stable. Then disengage if necessary.

. Consider other strategies [besides those of Housing Help/Aide Logement]. Another way would be to start off by forming a Board of Directors, including some experienced lobbyists and prominent people, do a feasibility study, and then get some funding for a pilot project. Different strategies will be effective in different communities.

5.2 Operations/Style of Service Delivery

. Remember your mandate is very simple - it is to help people get housing. Don't get bureaucratic. Clients have had too much of that.

. To avoid bureaucratization: have several small service outlets, rather than one big one ... ensure that the people you hire are committed to the purpose and style of the service; and make sure your caseworkers have genuine empathy and experience in the real world.

. Try to find workers who have personal knowledge of housing problems.

. To find volunteers, use your personal and professional networks, put postings in local newspapers, get in touch with university schools of planning, social work and law, or community college social service programs.

. The beginning of a new service is experimental ... you need to be there and operating from six months to a year before you can determine the full range and specific details of the services you should offer.

. With regard to scheduling - respond to need and demand. Wait until you are known in the community, until the caseworkers have an idea of the best times to be open, before establishing (and printing) set hours.

. Make other agencies aware of your existence and competence by being good at what you do, by making sure you are visible (through the popular media) and by being willing to talk to people at conferences, meetings, and so on.

. If you incorporate, you can be more focused, more efficient, and you can apply directly for funding, rather than going through a larger organization.

. Instead of paying for advertising, get stories about your clients/service in the press.

5.3 Physical Features

. Create a storefront operation if possible ... situated in the heart of the community you want to serve ... where people can walk in off the street.

. Locate in a building with an appropriate ambience - not a shiny new office building - the environmental message is important.

. Have a "wailing room" - some private room where clients in real crisis can let go.

Appendix A:

Research Methods

Housing Help Case Study - Research Methods

File review, personal interviews, telephone interviews and participant observation were the data gathering methods used for this case study.

About fifty files and documents (reports, letters, proposals, etc.) were collected and reviewed. Thirteen face-to-face, in-depth, taped interviews were conducted with critical key informants, including the community developer who founded Housing Help/Aide Logement, housing policy experts, former and current directors of the service, front line staff, Board members, and former clients of Housing Help/Aide Logement. Five informants were interviewed in person a second time. Telephone interviews were conducted with representatives of: City, Regional and Provincial governments; the Federation of Ottawa-Carleton Tenants Association, the Property Standards Branch of the City of Ottawa, Community Legal Services and the Ontario Ministry of Housing Rent Review office; and three organizations equivalent to Housing Help/Aide Logement in other municipalities. (The names and affiliation of key informants are listed in Appendix B.)

In addition, a number of other organizations responding to homelessness and the lack of affordable housing available to low income people were contacted by telephone, in every region in Canada. These organizations were tracked down by calling the Canadian Council on Social Development and asking for the names of such groups at the provincial or local level; then the second set were contacted by telephone and asked about others, and so on. (The purpose and product of this phase of research are described in Appendix C.)

The principal investigator also went, as a participant-observer, on the Housing Help/Aide Logement Tour, a periodic event organized by Housing Help/Aide Logement, most recently with the help of students of the Carleton University School of Social Work. (The tour is described in detail in section 3.10 of this report.)

The information in this report was checked for accuracy by staff, Board members and clients of Housing Help/Aide Logement.

Appendix B

Key Informants

Key Informants

Note: Housing Help/Aide Logement = HH/AL

Aline Akeson
Community Developer and former Advisor to the Board of HH/AL

David Crenna
Housing Policy Analyst, university lecturer and Board member of HH/AL

Gary McCauley
Anglican minister and former Board member of both HH/AL and DHCS

Jack Smith
Chairman of the Board and former senior policy analyst with CMHC

Lynne Markell
Former Executive Director of DHCS

Elizabeth Arnold
Former coordinator of HH/AL and current Board member

Nora Sobolov
First coordinator/educator/caseworker of HH/AL and current Board member

Michael Wilson
Current Executive Director of HH/AL

Marie-France Robert
Caseworker at HH/AL

Renny Lambton
Caseworker at HH/AL

Bob MacDonald
Caseworker at HH/AL

Cassie Doyle
Social Housing Policy, City of Ottawa

Marnie Cappe
Regional Department of Planning

Sean Goetz-Gadon
Former executive assistant to the Minister of Housing of Ontario

Chantele Tie
Ottawa South Community Legal Services

Dan MacIntyre
Federation of Ottawa-Carleton Tenants Associations

Walter Williams
Ontario Ministry of Housing Rent Review, Ottawa Area

Kenneth Pritchard
Property Standards Branch, City of Ottawa

Three former clients of Housing Help/Aide Logement

Appendix C:

Other Organizations across Canada addressing homelessness and the housing problems of low income people

Other Organizations across Canada addressing homelessness and the housing problems of low income people

One of the initial aims of this case study was to "get the word out" about Housing Help/Aide Logement, so that other organizations across Canada might benefit from their development and experience.

To this end, Canadian groups which might make use of the information and modify it for application within their own communities, or use it in their work, were sought. A range of housing-related groups was purposely contacted: community-based, municipal, provincial; fledgling and well established; with narrow or broadly defined target clientele.

Profile information on eleven such groups across Canada is presented in this appendix. Each will receive a copy of this case study. The list forms the basis of a national network which may wish to share information, strategies, experiences, expertise and resources related to the provision of direct services to low income people who are dealing with housing problems and homelessness.

Readers may also wish to refer to another publication of CMHC, the Catalogue of Canadian Housing and Shelter Organizations: A Contribution to the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless - 1987, by Barry Pinsky and Mitzi D'Sousa of the Rooftops Canada Foundation. It lists all the organizations in Canada "whose members or target groups are those people who do not have access to the private ownership market" (p.ii). The catalogue includes transition houses for battered women and their children, YW/YMCA shelters, social service organizations, Missions, centres specifically for ex-offenders and ex-psychiatric patients, etc. etc. It is very wide ranging.

Province/Territory:	Yukon
Organization:	Housing Department, Council for Yukon Indians
Address:	22 Nistlin Drive Whitehorse Yukon Y1A 3S5
Telephone:	(403) 667-7631
Contact:	Art Stephenson Housing Director
Scope:	Yukon Territory
Services Provided:	. delivers and administers Rural and Native Housing Programs for the Yukon . agent for RRAP . responsible for general planning for housing in the First Nation, including new band housing and renovations . public information and provision of information on housing programs . matches people's needs with housing programs available . referral to other groups when necessary . no casework per se, but help people within the mandates of the programs they deliver
Clients:	Native people
Location in City:	N/A
Other Information:	. lack of housing a very serious problem in Whitehorse - a 0% vacancy rate and rents are very high . 90% of Native people live in subsidized housing

Province/Territory:	British Columbia
Organization:	Vancouver Housing Registry
Address:	501 East Broadway Vancouver, B.C. V5T 1X4
Telephone:	(604) 873-1313
Contact:	Leslie Timmins Manager
Scope:	City of Vancouver
Services Provided:	. housing information and referral . application forms for non-profit housing . registry of vacant market housing . daily newspaper and free telephone . counselling and support for tenants and people with special needs . education for tenants, housing providers and landlords . advocacy and community development on specific issues
Clients:	tenants, low and moderate income people, seniors, Native people, working poor (one third of clients are employed)
Location in City:	on main artery of the city, on bus routes
Other Information:	. located in storefront - a lot of walk-in clients . a community service of the Vancouver YW/YMCA . funded by the City and Province which saw a need and sent out a proposal call . started spring 1988 . serves 800 people per month . wants to send copies of the Housing Help/Aide Logement Case Study to municipalities outside Vancouver

Province/Territory:	Alberta
Organization:	Boyle Street Community Services Cooperative
Address:	9720 - 102 Avenue Edmonton, Alberta T5J 0E3
Telephone:	(403) 424-4106
Contact:	Hope Hunter Executive Director
Scope:	City of Edmonton
Services Provided:	. Housing Unit has two workers . operates a housing registry and placement service . provides follow-up, support and practical assistance . finds housing for the "hard to house" . provides support to landlords in dealing with tenants who have problems . does advocacy and inter-agency planning work
Clients:	Low income people from the inner city (80% Natives and some immigrants, mostly Southeast Asians) and some from the suburbs
Location in City:	Northwest Edmonton, "on the edge of skid row"
Other Information:	. operates as an inner city community centre, similar to Settlement Houses . also has drop-in and adult literacy programs, outreach and support for individuals and families, mental health services, inner city youth program . very client-centres, focusing on practical problem-solving

Province/Territory:	Saskatchewan
Organization:	Coalition on Housing
Address:	c/o Council on Social Development 2022 Halifax Street Regina, Saskatchewan S4P 1T7
Telephone:	(306) 565-8575
Contact:	Bob Ruttenberg Director, Council on SOcial Development
Scope:	City of Regina
Services Provided:	. no direct services . Coalition on Housing is a group of government and non-government people (city officials, clergy, welfare rights group, housing providers, real estate industry and housing action groups) committed to ensure decent, affordable housing in Regina . have studied housing conditions and problems in Regina and are generating possible solutions
Clients:	Natives and low income people
Location in City:	N/A
Other Information:	. housing has been identified as the key issue for poor people in Regina . Coalition on Housing held a seminar on June 16, 1990 "Renting in Regina" to discuss housing solutions proposed by tenants

Province/Territory:	Manitoba
Organization:	Housing Concerns Group
Address:	c/o Northend Ministry 470 Stella Avenue Winnipeg, Manitoba R2W 2V1
Telephone:	(204) 586-8137
Contact:	Doug Martindale (United Church minister and staff person at Northend Ministry)
Scope:	inner City of Winnipeg
Services Provided:	. lobbying in relation to housing legislation at City and Provincial levels . limited assistance to tenants (constrained by lack of staff) . workshops for tenants on landlord-tenant legislation
Clients:	low income tenants
Location in City:	inner city
Other Information:	. opened in 1984 . trying to get funding for staff so they can do casework and advocacy . Board of Directors consists of tenants and community workers

Province/Territory:	Ontario
Organization:	Access to Permanent Housing Committees and Initiatives
Address:	4th Floor, Hepburn Building 80 Grosvenor Street Toronto, Ontario M7A 1E9
Telephone:	(416) 965-1718
Contact:	Virginia Rowden (Policy and Program Analyst, Ontario Ministry of Community and Social Services)
Scope:	Province of Ontario
Services Provided:	. joint initiative between Ministry of Housing and Ministry of Community and Social Services . provides project funding to local communities in Ontario so they can address the structural problems of homelessness . 38 local "Access committees" throughout Ontario review proposals and make funding decisions; some have become housing action groups, doing public education, fund raising and campaigning
Clients:	people with housing problems in local areas
Location in City:	N/A
Other Information:	. this is an experimental program, not on-going . copies of the case study have been requested for all 38 Access committees

Province/Territory:	Quebec
Organization:	Department of Housing and Urban Development, City of Montreal
Address:	276 St. Jacques Street West 2nd Floor Montreal, Quebec H2Y 1N3
Telephone:	(514) 872-5477
Contact:	Martin Wexler Director
Scope:	City of Montreal
Services Provided:	. responsible for research and policy development in housing as well as planning a variety of housing programs . a recently adopted housing policy includes setting up a one-stop housing centre; looking at models for this
Clients:	none yet
Location in City:	N/A
Other Information:	. the push for the one-stop housing service came from immigrant and seniors' groups . Mr. Wexler very interested in receiving information about housing service models

Province/Territory:	New Brunswick
Organization:	Habitation New Brunswick
Address:	P.O. Box 6125, Station A, Saint John, New Brunswick E2L 4R6
Telephone:	(506) 634-1673
Contact:	Hazel Bedford Co-ordinator
Scope:	Province of New Brunswick
Services Provided:	. no direct service to people with housing problems . acts as Provincial Secretariat for all community-based housing coalitions in New Brunswick . activities include public education, information dissemination and advocacy to help solve housing problems
Clients:	indirectly - people in need of housing
Location in City:	N/A
Other Information:	. helped set up housing coalitions (made up of government officials, church groups, social agencies, housing providers and consumers) in NB; there are currently 13 coalitions . staff person from Habitation New Brunswick has visited Housing Help/Aide Logement in Ottawa

Province/Territory:	Nova Scotia
Organization:	Nova Scotia Housing and Renewal Association
Address:	P.O. Box 817 Dartmouth, Nova Scotia B2Y 3Z3
Telephone:	(902) 420-7583
Contact:	Grant Wanzel (teaches architecture at T.U.N.S.)
Scope:	Province of Nova Scotia
Services Provided:	. no direct client work . planned activities: public education, information, networking, and lobbying government regarding housing policies (this is a new organization)
Clients:	indirectly - people who need better housing
Location in City:	N/A
Other Information:	. province-wide coalition of all public, co-op and non-profit housing groups . comprised of public and non-profit housing officers, representatives of Rural and Native housing programs, municipal housing departments and women's shelters

Province/Territory:	Prince Edward Island
Organization:	King Square Non-Profit Housing Corporation
Address:	259 Queen Street Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1A 4B9
Telephone:	(902) 566-7722 (Bill Campbell) (902) 368-2658 (Ron Myers)
Contact:	Bill Campbell Chairperson, Board of Directors Ron Myers Social Worker
Scope:	City of Charlottetown
Services Provided:	. 6-unit crisis centre connected to King Square Co-op Housing (for people in transition, for a stay up to 12 months) . self-help group to help residents of crisis centre graduate to self sufficiency . support and assistance to crisis centre residents and tenants of private rent supplement units arranged by the corporation given by social worker
Clients:	battered women, people with drug and alcohol problems, abused seniors, the unattached
Location in City:	centre core
Other Information:	. the need for housing help came out of the operation of a food bank and soup kitchen . the group which operates the crisis unit and one which operates the co-op housing are separate . the Corporation is in the process of acquiring 20 more units, of which 5 will be crisis units

Province/Territory:	**Newfoundland**
Organization:	Community Services COuncil
Address:	P.O. Box 5116 Virginia Park Plaza Newfoundland Drive St. John's, Newfoundland A1C 5V3
Telephone:	(709) 753-9860
Contact:	Penelope Rowe Executive Director
Scope:	Province of Newfoundland
Services Provided:	. no direct client services . research and planning on social issues . information centre/library . meetings to work on local housing problems
Clients:	indirectly, the citizens of Newfoundland
Location in City:	N/A
Other Information:	. there is currently no formal housing coalition in Newfoundland . information about creative housing solutions will be welcomed

Appendix D:

Other Useful Contacts

Other Useful Contacts

Michael Wilson
Executive Director
Housing Help/Aide Logement
792 Somerset West
Ottawa, ON
K1R 6R2
(613) 563-4532

Shelly Rempel
Housing Researcher
Housing Help Centre
Hamilton/Wentworth
135 Rebecca Street
Hamilton, ON
L8R 1B9
(416) 528-0221

Rhonda Vilitel-Lammert
Housing Co-ordinator
Project S.H.A.R.E.
Community Resources Centre
5017 Victoria Avenue
Niagara Falls, ON
L2E 4C9
(416) 357-5121

John Osczypko
Co-ordinator
Housing Help Centre
125 Welland Avenue
St. Catharines, ON
L2R 2N5
(416) 984-8955

Appendix E:

Protocols/Forms Used by Housing Help/Aide Logement and Similar Housing Services in Ontario

Housing Help/Aide Logement:

1. Client Intake Form
2. Covering letter to accompany client's application for subsidized housing
3. Page from Vacancy Book
4. Caseworkers' monthly "non-case" statistics

HOUSING HELP / AIDE LOGEMENT

File Number:_____ **Status:** 1. Active 2. Inactive

Case #:_____ **Client Visits:**_____ **Client Calls:**_____ **Agency Calls/Visits:**_____

Origin of Service: 1. Central 2. West End **Date:**_____ **Time:** 1. a.m. 2. p.m. 3. ppm

Contact Made By: 1. Telephone 2. Visit **H.H. Worker's Name:**_____

Category: 1. Landlord 2. Tenant 3. Boarder 4. Homeless 5. Property Owner 6. Roomer

Surname	Given Name	Gender 1.F/2.M	Age
1.			
2.			

Family Type: 1. Single 2. Couple 3. Pregnant 4. Group (unrelated) **# of Children:** ____

Address:_____

Telephone Number:_____ Ward/Area/Shelter/Homeless:_____

Problem Contact: _____

Affiliated Organization: _____

UNIT SIZE: 1. BACHELOR 2. ROOM 3. 1 BEDROOM 4. 2 BEDROOM
5. 3 BEDROOM 6. 4 BEDROOM OR GREATER 7. SUBSIDIZED

Rent:_____ Inc: **Hydro:** 1. Yes 2. No **Heat:** 1. Yes 2. No **Parking:** 1. Yes 2. No

Income by Month
Amount::_____

Income Source: 1. GWA 2. U.I.C. 3. FBA 4. Pension
5. Immigration Sponsorship
6. Employment 7. No Income 8. Student Loan
9. Manpower Course 10. Other (specify)_____

MONTH x 12 = INCOME LEVEL

Income Levels: 1. Under $5,000 2. $5,001 - $10,000 3. $10,001 - $15,000
4. $15,001 - $20,000 5. $20,001 - $25,000 6. $25,001 and Over

First Language: **Language of Service:**

(LEAVE OUT IF LANDLORD IS CLIENT)

Landlord's Name: **Address:**

Referred By: 1. Friend 2. Advertising 3. Walking By 4. Vanier 5. West End 6. Central
7. Politician (Specify):_____
8. Agency (Specify):_____
9. Other (Specify):_____

Reason:
1. Eviction
2. Maintenance Problem
3. Illegal Rent
4. Landlord/Tenant Problem
5. Needs Permanent Subsidized Housing
6. Needs Permanent Low-End of Market Housing
7. Needs a Room
8. Needs Emergency Housing
9. Needs Help with Subsidized Housing Agency
10. Information
11. Other_
12. Help with Social Service Agency

Service Used:
1. Application
2. F.O.C.T.A.
3. General Landlord/Tenant Information
4. Property Standards Inspector
5. Legal Aid
6. Community Service Centre
7. Vacancy Board
8. Help with Subsidized Housing Agency
9. Help with Social Service Agency
10. Other (Specify):_____
11. Landlord/Tenant Mediation

A) O.C.R.H.A.
B) City Living
C) Rooming House
D) C.C.O.C.
E) Minto
F) Co-op
G) Private Market

HOUSING HELP / AIDE LOGEMENT
DALHOUSIE HEALTH & COMMUNITY SERVICE

SERVICES COMMUNAUTAIRES ET DE SANTÉ DALHOUSIE

HOUSING HELP & COMMUNITY ACTION
AIDE-LOGEMENT ET L'ACTION COMMUNAUTAIRES

DATE:_____

Ottawa-Carleton Regional Housing Authority
1545 Carling Avenue, Suite 701
OTTAWA, Ontario
K1Z 8R3

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Please find enclosed a completed application form for subsidized housing in the name of

_____

< > The following documentation is attached:

1. Proof of Income < >
2. Drug Benefit Card < >
3. Other < > _____

< > The following documentation will be forwarded by the applicant within the next few weeks:

1. Proof of Income < >
2. Drug Benefit Card < >
3. Other < > _____

Sincerely

Case Worker

:hb
Encl.

I, _____, hereby authorize OCRHA to divulge any information in my file to HOUSING HELP staff.

_____ _____
CLIENT SIGNATURE DATE

_____ _____
WITNESS DATE

HOUSING HELP / AIDE LOGEMENT

APARTMENT VACANCY NOTICE

_____
Date of Listing

NUMBER OF BEDROOMS: _____ APARTMENT

ADDRESS: _____

NEAREST INTERSECTION: _____

DATE AVAILABLE _____

FRIDGE:_____STOVE:_____LAUNDRY FACILITIES:_____

DESCRIPTION: _____

_____

_____

_____

RENT:_____

UTILITIES INCLUDED:
HEAT:_____ HYDRO:_____ PARKING:_____

WILL ACCEPT LETTER OF GUARANTEE: YES:_____ NO:_____

FIRST AND LAST MONTH'S RENT: YES:_____ NO:_____

PERSON TO CONTACT:_____

TELEPHONE NUMBER :_____

"The listing of either a Landlord and/or a Tenant in this inventory does not constitute either a recommendation or endorsement of either the Landlord or Tenant by Housing Help Corporation Aide Logement, Ottawa-Carleton."

HOUSING HELP/AIDE LOGEMENT

CASEWORKER
MONTHLY NON-CASE STATISTICS

NAME:_____
MONTH:_____

INFORMATION BY ISSUE					TOTAL CA
GENERAL LANDLORD/ TENANT INFO.					
EVICTION					
MAINTENANCE PROBLEM					
HIGH RENT					
ILLEGAL RENT					
LANDLORD/TENANT PROBLEM					
NEEDS PERMANENT SUBSIDIZED HOUSING					
NEEDS PERMANENT LOW-END MARKET HOUSING					
NEEDS A ROOM					
NEEDS EMERGENCY HOUSING					
NEEDS HELP WITH SUBSIDIZED HOUSING AGENCY					
VACANCY LISTING/ NEWSPAPER					
TELEPHONE					
INFORMATION ON HOUSING HELP					
ASKED TO COME IN TO OPEN CASE					
MONTHLY TOTAL CALLS/VISITS					

Housing Help Centre - St. Catharines, Ontario

1. Client Intake Form
2. " " " (cont'd)

ST. CATHARINES ONTARIO

HOUSING HELP CENTRE

Date_____ New_____
Repeat_____
Name_____ Follow Up_____

Address_____ Phone_____

Age: Under 16____ Current Tenure 1.Homeless_____
16-18 ____ 2.Emergency_____
19-25 ____ 3.Shared_____
26-60 ____ 4.Institution___
Over 61 ____ 5.Supportive____
6.Assisted_____
Walk-in_____ 7.Rental_____
Telephone_____ 8.Homeowner_____

Family Composition #ofDependents Income

1. Single Male_____ 1. One____ 1. GWA___ 6.Disab____
2. Single Female_____ 2. Two____ 2. FBA___ 7.Spousal__
Couple w/o_____ 3. Three__ 3. UIC___ 8.None____
Couple with_____ 4. Four___ 4. Emp____ 9.Training_
5. Single Par Male___ 5. Five___ 5. Pens__ 10.Other___
6. Single Par Fem____ 6. Six____ _____

Housing Problem

1.Homeless_____ 6.Utilities____ 11.Job Related_____
2.Eviction_____ 7.Discrim_____ 12.Affordability___
3.Rent Inc_____ 8.No Access____ 13.Transportation__
4.Maintenance__ 9.Land/Ten_____ 14.Other_____
5.Last M Rent__ 10.Neg Social___

Type Needed Size

1.Emerg_____ 4.Access_____ 1. Room_____ 4. 1BR_____
2.Support____ 5.Assisted___ 2. Room+____ 5. 2BR_____
3.Perm_____ 6.Other_____ 3. Bach_____ 6. 3BR_____
7. 4BR_____

Municipality

1.St.Cath_____ 7.Welland_____ 13.Outside Region____
2.Thorold_____ 8.Pelham_____ 14.No Address_____
3.Lincoln_____ 9.Port Col____ 15.Ridgeway_____
4.Grimsby_____ 10.FortErie____ 16.Stevensville_____
5.N.F._____ 11.Wainfleet___ 17.Crystal Beach_____
6.N.O.T.L.____ 12.West Linc___ 18.U.S.A._____

Referral From

1. Legal Clinic_____ 4. N.N.H.A.____ 7. Publicity_____
2. NonProfit_____ 5. Info Niag___ 8. Co-Op_____
3. Soc.Service_____ 6. Friend_____ 9. Other_____

Services Provided

1. Directory____ 5. Utili_____ 9. Ref to Rent_____
2. L/T Act_____ 6. EmergPlc____ 10. Other_____
3. L/T Medi_____ 7. Ref Legal___ 11. Transport_____
4. Fin Assist___ 8. Ref SocSer__ 12. Streetworker____

Placement Type

1. Emerg Shelter____ 4. Accessible____ 7. Permanent_____
2. Supportive_____ 5. Other_____ 8. Transition____
3. Assisted_____ 6. Retained_____

On Waiting List For NNHA Yes____ No____

On Waiting List For Co-Op Yes____ No____

COMMENTS:_____

FOLLOW UP:_____

AGENCIES OR PERSONS (Include telephone number)
CONTACTED:_____

WORKER_____ DATE_____

Project S.H.A.R.E. - Niagara Falls

1. Client Intake Form
2. " " " (cont'd)
3. Monthly "other services" statistics
4. Monthly Housing Statistics Work Sheet
5. " " " (cont'd)

HOUSING HELP CENTRE
PROJECT S.H.A.R.E., NIAGARA FALLS
INTAKE

Date: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

D.O.B. _____

S.I.N. _____

Dependents, Name and Age

_____
_____
_____
_____

AGE OF CLIENT
1. under 16 yrs ____
2. 16 - 18 yrs ____
3. 19 - 25 yrs ____
4. 26 - 60 yrs ____
5. 61 over ____
6. unknown ____

FAMILY COMPOSITION
1. single male ____
2. single female ____
3. couple w/o ____
4. couple w/ ____
5. single parent male ____
6. single parent female ____

DEPENDENTS
1. one ____
2. two ____
3. three ____
4. four ____
5. five + ____

CURRENT TENURE
1. Homeless ____
2. Shelter ____
3. Shared ____
4. Institution ____
5. Supportive ____
6. Assisted ____
7. Rental ____
8. Homeowner ____

PRIMARY SOURCE OF INCOME
1. G.W.A. ____
2. F.B.A. ____
3. UIC ____
4. Employment ____
5. Canada Pension ____
6. Disability ____
7. Spousal ____
8. No Income ____
9. Other ____

Caseworkers Name:

_____

MUNICIPALITY OF RESIDENCE
1. St. Catherines ____
2. Thorold ____
3. Niagara Falls ____
4. N-O-T-L ____
5. Welland ____
6. Pt. Colborne ____
7. Pt. Erie ____
8. Outside region ____
9. No Address ____

REFERRAL FROM
1. Legal Clinic ____
2. Non-profit Housing ____
3. Social Services ____
4. Local Housing Auth. ____
5. Information Niagara ____
6. Friend ____
7. Advertisement ____
8. Other ____
9. Co-op Emergency ____

HOUSING PROBLEM
1. Homeless ____
2. Eviction ____
3. Rent Increase/Review ____
4. Maintenance Problem ____
5. Last Month's Rent ____
6. Utilities ____
7. Discrimination ____
8. Lack of Access ____
9. Landlord/Tenant ____
0. Neg. Soc al Envir ____
1. Job Related ____
2. Gen. Finan. Assist. ____
3. Transportation ____
4. Other ____

TYPE OF ACCOMMODATION REQUESTED
1. Emergency ____
2. Supportive ____
3. Permenant ____
4. Accessible ____
5. Assisted ____
6. Other ____

SIZE
1. Room ____
2. Room + ____
3. Bachelor ____
4. One Bdr ____
5. Two Bdr ____
6. Three Bdr ____
7. Four + ____

SERVICES PROVIDED

1. Housing Directory ____
2. Landlord/Tenant ____
3. Landlord/Tenant Media. ____
4. Emerg. Fian. Assist. ____
5. Utilities ____
6. Emerg. Placement ____
7. Ref. to Legal Clinic ____
8. Ref. to Social Services ____
9. Ref. to Rent Review ____
10. Other ____
11. Transportation ____
12. Follow-up ____
13. Housing Support ____

LANDLORD NAME AND NUMBER: _____

WHEN IS THE ACCOMMODATION REQUIRED: _____

PLACEMENT

		WHEN
1. Emergency	____	_____
2. Supportive	____	_____
3. Assisted	____	_____
4. Accessible	____	_____
5. Other	____	_____
6. Retain housing	____	_____
7. Permanent	____	_____

Information on accommodation found.

_____

_____

_____

CASE NOTES

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

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_____

_____

PROJECT S.H.A.R.E.
5017 Victoria Avenue, Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada L2E 4C9 (41(, 357-5121

HOUSING HELP CENTRE

OTHER SERVICES

MONTH:

SERVICE TYPE	TIMES HANDLED	TOTAL
HOUSING DIRECTORY INPUT		
HHC INQUIRIES		
PUBLIC EDUCATION		
HOUSING MEETINGS		
CONFERENCES SEMINARS WORKSHOPS		
NON-HOUSING REFERRALS		

Month: _____

Project SHARE - Housing Statistics Worksheet

	(1) Client Name	(2) Client #	(3) Client Status	(4) Client Age	(5) Family Comp.	(6) # of Dependents	(7) Current Tenure	(8) Income Source	(9) Munic. of Residence	(10) Referral From	(11) Housing Problem	(12) Type Acc need
a												
b												
c												
d												
e												
f												
g												
h												
i												
j												
k												
l												
m												
n												
o												
p												
q												
r												
s												
t												
TOTALS: Clients served			1=___ 2=___ 3=___ ___	1=___ 2=___ 3=___ 4=___ 5=___ 6=___ uk___	1= ___ 2= ___ 3= ___ 4= ___ 5= ___ 6= ___ uk ___	1=___ 2=___ 3=___ 4=___ 5+=___	1=___ 2=___ 3=___ 4=___ 5=___ 6=___ 7=___ 8=___ uk___	1= ___ 2= ___ 3= ___ 4= ___ 5= ___ 6= ___ 7= ___ 8= ___ 9= ___ uk ___	1=___ 2=___ 3=___ 4=___ 5=___ 6=___ 7=___ 8=___ 9=___ uk___	1 =___ 2 =___ 3 =___ 4 =___ 5 =___ 6 =___ 7 =___ 8 =___ 9 =___ uk ___	1=___ 2=___ 3=___ 4=___ 5=___ 6=___ 7=___ 8=___ 9=___ 10=___ 11=___ 12=___ 13=___ 14=___	1=___ 2=___ 3=___ 4=___ 5=___ 6=___

	(13) Accomm. Size	(14) Services Provided	(15) Placement Type	(15a) Adequate	(15b) Afford.	(16) Shelterless No Accom.	(17) Follow-up Not Possible	(18) Comments
a								
b								
c								
d								
e								
f								
g								
h								
i								
j								
k								
l								
m								
n								
o								
p								
q								
r								
s								
t								
	1=____ 2=____ 3=____ 4=____ 5=____ 6=____ 7=____	1=____ 2=____ 3=____ 4=____ 5=____ 6=____ 7=____ 8=____ 9=____ 10=____ 11=____ 12=____ 13=____	1=____ 2=____ 3=____ 4=____ 5=____ 6=____ 7=____	Total___	Total__	Total__	Total___	

Housing Help Centre - Hamilton Wentworth

1. Client Intake Form
2. " " " (cont'd)
3. Weekly record - Telephone & Walk-In contacts
4. Weekly Record - Community Work & Advocacy
5. Page from Vacancy Book

HOUSING HELP CENTRE, HAMILTON-WENTWORTH

INTAKE

Number:_____ Date:_____

The information collected on this form is confidential and will not be released under any circumstances without permission.

How: (1) phone call (2) visit (3) home visit (4) other

Phone Number:_____

Last Name:_____Given Name(s):_____

Street Address:_____

City:_____Province:_____

Postal Code:_____Area:_____

Category:
( ) provider
( ) tenant
( ) roomer/boarder/sharing
( ) homeless
( ) property owner
( ) institution
( ) other_____

Specific Needs:
( ) physically disabled
( ) family violence
( ) other_____

Referred:
( ) friend
( ) advertising
( ) agency
( ) politician
( ) walking by
( ) other_____

What:
( ) needs permanent subsidized housing
( ) needs market housing while waiting for subsidized housing
( ) needs permanent affordable market housing
( ) needs a room
( ) needs emergency housing
( ) shared accommodation
( ) need for last months rent
( ) eviction
( ) landlord/tenant problem
( ) illegal rent
( ) maintenance problem
( ) needs help with subsidized housing agency
( ) needs help with a social service agency
( ) other_____

Household Type:
( ) one person
( ) couple, no children
( ) one parent, 1 child
( ) one parent, more than one child
( ) two parents, 1 child
( ) two parents, more than one child
( ) extended household
( ) other_____

Ages:
adult(s) age(s):

____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____

children(s) age(s):

____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____

____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____

Income Source:
( ) welfare
( ) family benefits
( ) family allowance
( ) support
( ) employment
( ) U.I.C.
( ) pension
( ) immigration sponsorship
( ) student loan
( ) training allowance
( ) no income
( ) other_____

Actual Gross Income: $_____

Income Level:
( ) under $5,000.00
( ) $5,000.00 - $10,000.00
( ) $10,000.01 - $15,000.00
( ) $15,000.01 - $20,000.00
( ) $20,000.01 - $25,000.00
( ) $25,000.00 and over

Type of Accommodation:

_____

Current Provider
Name and Address:

_____

_____

_____

Rent: $_____

Heat: $_____

Hydro: $_____

Other: $_____

Total: $_____

Service Used:
( ) assisted housing application or list of assisted housing
( ) referrals/information
( ) housing registry information
( ) mailed list of subsidized housing
( ) housing search skills
( ) housing information/work centre
( ) landlord/tenant/rent review information
( ) health/fire and property standards
( ) advocate/information assisted housing agency or landlord
( ) advocate/information social service agency
( ) mailed subsidized housing applications
( ) provided ride or bus tickets
( ) other_____

Are there any other organizations or agencies you have been in contact with that you think we should know about?

Follow up

Type of Housing Secured:

_____

_____

Community
Worker's Name: _____

HOUSING HELP CENTRE, HAMILTON-WENTWORTH

Telephone & Walk In Contacts

Week:_____
Month:_____

Walk-In:						
Telephone:						

Information Requested/Given:	MON.	TUES.	WED.	THURS.	FRI.	TOTAL
General about Housing Help Centre						
Subsidized Housing						
Landlord/Tenant/Rent Review						
Market Housing/FLS						
Emergency Housing						
Maintenance - Health, Fire & Property Standards						
Referral to other Community Service						
Landlord Information						
Intake Free Listing Service						
Miscellaneous						
Total:						

Worker_____

HOUSING HELP CENTRE - HAMILTON-WENTWORTH

WEEK_____

WORKER_____

COMMUNITY WORK & ADVOCACY

Description of Activity	*Time Spent*	*Role of Staff*	*Results (Where Appropriate)*

Housing HelpCentre
HAMILTON/WENTWORTH

Places To Rent Intake Date:_____

Contact Person:_____

Phone:_____

Street Address:_____

City:_____ Area:_____

Date Available:_____

Type of Housing:

( ) Room
( ) Room and Board
( ) Shared Accommodation
( ) Bachelor
( ) One Bedroom Apartment
( ) Two Bedroom Apartment
( ) Three Bedroom Apartment
( ) More Than Three Bedroom Apartment
( ) One Bedroom House
( ) Two Bedroom House
( ) Three Bedroom House
( ) More Than Three Bedroom House
( ) One Bedroom Townhouse
( ) Two Bedroom Townhouse
( ) Three Bedroom Townhouse
( ) More Than Three Bedroom Townhouse
( ) Other
_____

Rent: $_____

Heat: $_____

Hydro: $_____

Parking: $_____

Last Month Rent: $_____

Other: $_____

General Description/Special Features:

_____

_____

_____

Initials:_____